

Emergency Planning with the Disability Community: Gaps and Strategies

The following are gaps and strategies that emerged from the Emergency Planning with the Disability Community Forum on May 13, 2014. A work plan is being formulated to begin addressing these items more specifically. There was interest among many of the attendees regarding working together on one or more of the gaps listed. As the work continues, further updates will be provided. If you have questions or comments on please email Kate Stein at kate.stein@kingcounty.gov.

Transportation	
Gaps Identified in Sessions	Strategies
1. Transport of medically fragile individuals is a problem if/when first responders are unavailable.	Explore the potential to share transportation resources among agencies including community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, first responders, search and rescue teams, jails, airports, casinos, schools, and 4x4 clubs.
	Map the capacity of transportation resources that are able to operate in the snow.
	Promote development of alternate strategies if transport is not an option.
2. Reduction of Metro fixed routes creates less capacity to transport.	Enhance relationships among neighbors.
	Increase awareness of route reductions.
	Emergency managers, public works officials, and community members advocate for prioritization of which roads are plowed.
	Promote development of alternate strategies if transport is not an option.
3. There is less capacity to transport supplies (including durable medical equipment) and equipment.	
4. There is a lack of staff/drivers to support transportation needs.	
5. Specialized transportation needs are not always adequately communicated.	Determine a way to gather information about specialized transportation needs in advance of an emergency.
	Develop plans/mechanisms for those with needs to communicate their needs.

Preparedness	
Gaps Identified in Sessions	Strategies
1. Planning beyond three days is more complex.	Identify the specific needs of clients and community members (lists of high-risk individuals)
	Build local relationships (neighbors, local businesses, healthcare facilities, service providers, local emergency managers) to help with providing resources
2. There is a lack of education regarding simple ways to prepare without it being overwhelming.	Look beyond the individual and help businesses support their communities (such as condos/apartments, senior centers, and other local establishments)
	Gather and disperse information that already exists (Patient Assistance Programs, Washington Reuse Coalition for durable medical equipment, Red Cross tools)
	Promote/support community teaching opportunities (at libraries, community centers)
3. The perception is that preparedness is hard to prioritize without extra funding.	Incentivize preparedness in creative ways
	Integrate preparedness with other activities that support community resilience

Shelter	
Gaps Identified in Sessions	Strategies
1. Shelter: Not accessible, not prepared with enough supplies	Ensure shelter is accessible and equipped with extra medication, power backups, medical equipment, batteries ; know where charging stations are
	Partnerships – with the Vulnerable Populations Operations Workgroup, Northwest Healthcare Response Network, Military
	Ensure service providers have/know their agency emergency plans ; Include people with disabilities in the planning
2. Shelter: Do not know how to care for diverse populations: cultural groups, individuals with mental and behavioral disabilities; not enough staff;	Have backup interpreters; cultural liaisons
	FAST Teams
	Cross training staff so all capable of providing direct support during emergency
3. Shelter in place: not prepared for emergency	Have supplies for more than 3 days
	Have a communication plan with family and friends
4. How to care for individuals not connected with an agency?	

Communication	
Gaps Identified in Sessions	Strategies
1. Power outages prevent access to the internet or television for information	“Map Your Neighborhood” program ; partner with neighboring organizations ; train and educate agencies on how to help vulnerable populations
	Establish a network for communications
	Mobile chargers that do not require electricity
	Smart911
	Connect with direct service providers who can distribute messages to their clients
2. When phone lines are down, creates barrier to transmitting information	HAM radios
	Social Media
	Educate/train first responders on needs of people requiring special assistance and use of augmentive communication devices
3. First responders unfamiliar with how to assist	Develop communication material in multiple formats (pictorial messages, accessible messages and websites) and languages
	Robo Calling (through established system that people trust, such as Mosques)
4. Messages are not reaching members of the community – deaf/hard of hearing ; non-English speakers	Language line
	FAST teams